



City of Madison News Release

For Immediate Release:

Jan 17, 2013

For More Information Contact:

Jeff Golden

(608) 243-0302

Grant to Study Infant Mortality Announced

Information to be Used to Help Improve Birth Outcomes

Public Health-Madison and Dane County (PHMDC) recently received a two-year grant of \$50,000 from the Wisconsin Partnership, a program of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. The grant will be used to support an expansion of Dane County's fetal and infant mortality review process.

Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) is a national model to improve birth outcomes and prevent infant death. PHMDC started the FIMR in 2011. Information is collected on every stillbirth and each infant that dies in the first year of life who is a resident of Dane County. Anonymity is preserved throughout the process. The FIMR process leads to recommendations for community action to help eliminate the preventable causes of stillbirths and infant deaths.

This project will be a partnership between PHMDC and Dr. Whitney Witt, of UW-Madison, an expert in maternal and child health. According to Dr. Witt, "This community-academic partnership is an unique opportunity to gain critical information about how to improve birth outcomes for some of Wisconsin's most vulnerable women,"

Much can be learned from a review of a mother's and her infant's medical history and other available information. However, the most valuable perspective comes from the mother who has lost her infant. This grant will allow the PHMDC FIMR to offer and conduct interviews with these mothers. Participation is voluntary.

All communities have experienced preventable fetal and infant deaths. The PHMDC FIMR has members that represent over 25 agencies from Dane County and two that work throughout the state. The recommendations coming out of this project will be shared with colleagues in Dane County and across the state.

According to Daniel Stattelman-Scanlan, Perinatal Program Supervisor for PHMDC, "These infant deaths are tragic. By looking closely at each of these, we create the possibility of learning enough details to allow us to develop better approaches to reduce infant deaths and stillbirths."

Many factors contribute to birth outcomes and infant health. The FIMR team has already identified areas that need improvement. The disparity in birth outcomes between African Americans and whites continues to be a problem in Dane County and its solution remains a high priority concern for the FIMR team. Additional priority areas have already been identified such as e unsafe sleep environments, chronic diseases, substance abuse, and lack of health care. A more detailed FIMR report will be released later this year with more on these issues.

-END-

NEWS RELEASE

Public Health - Madison & Dane County

####